

Retirement ceremony to be held June 25 for Judge Larry Roberts

June 19, 2015

Retiring Court of Appeals Judge Larry Roberts of Meridian will be honored at a ceremony on June 25 at 2:30 p.m. in the Court of Appeals Courtroom at the Gartin Justice Building, 450 High Street in Jackson. A reception will follow.

Speakers will include House Speaker Pro Tempore Greg Snowden of Meridian and Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Leslie Southwick of Jackson. Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. and Court of Appeals Chief Judge L. Joseph Lee will make presentations. Judge Roberts will speak before the conclusion of the program.

Judge Roberts, who will retire June 30, is the longest continuously serving member of the state judiciary. His 37 years of public service includes nine and a half years on the Court of Appeals, 19 years as a Circuit Judge of the 10th Circuit District that includes Clarke, Kemper, Lauderdale and Wayne counties, and eight years as a Lauderdale County Court judge.

He was the youngest judge of a court of record in state history when he was elected Lauderdale County Court Judge in 1978. He took office in January 1979.

Gov. Haley Barbour appointed him to the Court of Appeals on Jan. 4, 2006.

During his service on the Court of Appeals, Judge Roberts participated in more than 4,800 case decisions, wrote more than 550 decisions on the merits, and participated in thousands of motions.

Judge Roberts served on two committees which laid extensive groundwork for changes in criminal law and rules of criminal court practice. In 2011, the Uniform Criminal Rules Study Committee, with Judge Roberts as co-chair, submitted its report and recommendations to the Supreme Court after more than six years of work. The proposal, pending before the Supreme Court, would create a uniform set of rules which would address every aspect of criminal proceedings from initiation of charges through post-trial motions. He also served on the legislatively created Corrections and Criminal Justice Task Force in 2013. The Task Force's recommendations to the Legislature led to passage of House Bill 585 in 2014.

Judge Roberts is a past member of the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Rules. He served on the Board of Governors of the Mississippi Judicial College. He was chairman of the Conference of County Court Judges and the Conference of Circuit Court Judges. He also served as a presiding judge of the Bar Complaints Tribunal for attorney discipline.

Judge Roberts was born June 27, 1949, in Cleveland, Mississippi. His family moved to Pachuta and later to Meridian. He earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from the University of Mississippi in 1970, and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Mississippi School of Law in 1973. He was admitted to the Mississippi Bar May 1, 1973. He engaged in the general practice of law in Meridian from May 1973 until December 1978.

Judge Roberts served as a U.S. Army reservist for 20 years. He served on active duty for almost a year during Operation Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991. He was assigned to the 1181st USA Transportation Terminal Unit in Meridian. He retired from the military in 1994 with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Judge Roberts is married to Sheila McCollum Roberts, who retired after 31 years of service as a Meridian elementary school teacher. They have two sons, David W. Roberts (wife Meredith Rea Roberts) and Bryan P. Roberts.

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